

# Minutes of Berwick St. James Village Meeting Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2014

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In attendance: Neil MacDougall (Chairman)

Olivia Marchant (Deputy Chair)

Guests: Cllr Ian West.

Total in attendance: 36

## Summary of issues discussed and decisions made

- 1. Introduction and Apologies For Absence – Chairman** **Action**

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Ian West, and new residents Peter and Kate Wood, James and Claire Whatley
- 2. Apologies for absence**

Received from Helen Riding, Bill Hiscocks, Henry Colthurst, Tim Marchant, Michael Weissmuller, Nigel Rodgers, Stephen & Ailsa Bush, Gill Brasher, Al & Emma Smith, Sarah & Toby Humphreys, Keith & Gail Lovett, Diana Gifford-Mead.
- 3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising**
  - a. Flooding: we now have bags, sand, gel sacks, flood signs and a Flood Officer: James Hardy.
  - b. The new litter bin has been installed near The Boot, and is in use and being emptied by the Council.
  - c. All other matters arising are dealt with separately in the meeting (see agenda items 7, 8 and 9)

The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the last meeting.  
Proposed: Charlie Street. Seconded: Carolyn MacDougall.

## **4. Council and A303 Update – Ian West**

**A303:** The study is continuing; Stage 2 ended on 28 August. The proposals put forward are a part on-line, part off-line dual carriageway plus tunnel, or dual carriageway to the north (following the old 'purple route').

Some issues re the tunnel option have now been resolved, notably a long-held disagreement between English Heritage and Natural England over the route/design. Ian felt the tunnel was most likely to be the option the government would consider, especially as the costs of boring have also been reduced, following further research. The key moment will be the government's autumn statement: if it is mentioned in this, it is likely to go ahead.

John Glen has been working hard on the issue and has high hopes of progress at last. There has also been strong pressure from Somerset Council: it has done a study showing significant employment and economic benefits from an improved A303. There are several other sections of the road being looked at, as well as the Stonehenge section.

The report on the rat-run problems that have been plaguing local villages since

the traffic around Stonehenge has worsened is expected mid-November.

**Action**

**Fly-tipping:** there have been reports of fly-tipping up by the 303 and also by the Guide Hut. It appears to be on the increase. Please keep an eye out for this and keep a note of useful information such a registration number and let the Chairman know, who will in turn tell the Council.

## **5. Planning matters**

The Baileys' new home at Goodwins was still waiting for final approval; the Bushs' extension to 3 North View had been approved with minor alterations; the Woods' application for The Long Barn to be purely residential had been approved. There were no objections to the Clarks' application to changes to the Certificate of Lawfulness for Rotten Furlong, and no objections to the Marchants' application for tree work at Clock House.

## **6. Re-roofing of Village Bus Shelter**

The Chairman explained that the roof (not the full structure) of the bus shelter was beginning to rot and needed replacing. He illustrated this with photographs. Chris Brain had submitted an estimate for the materials to replace the cedar shingles etc, and had very kindly agreed to do the work itself for nothing, with help from Richard Foster and/or Neil MacDougall. He would be able to do this sometime in the New Year. The cost of materials would be £205.80, to be taken from the Community Fund.

Chairman

It was unanimously agreed to go ahead and thanks were extended to Chris Brain.

## **7. Reviews and Updates**

### **a. Security – Chairman**

The Farm Shop had been broken into early one morning in September. Nothing of value had been taken but the cost of repair to the door etc was not high enough to be covered by insurance. Chris Brain has again come to the rescue and repaired the damage. It is a reminder for everyone to remain vigilant about locking up and keeping an eye out for any suspicious activity.

### **b. Speedwatch – Marie Perry**

The Group have undertaken 24 sessions since May and logged 1000 vehicles: 89 were speeding and 8 of those excessively. Of those, 2 were out of county, and 2 were incorrectly logged registration numbers. The other 4 are being followed up. Most speeding in Berwick is at the 303 end of the village, in and out.

Marie and Carolyn McDougall recently hosted a forum of Community Speedwatch groups in south Wiltshire, and had a very good attendance rate: 24 out of 28 scheme leaders. They discussed issues of general concern in order that Marie and Carolyn can represent these groups at a meeting with the police. These concerns included:

- how to deal more effectively with repeat offenders – as they often drive through at the same time, it would help to have a police presence at such times;
- the lack of support from most neighbourhood Police Teams (NPTs);
- the lack of 30 mph repeater signs. (This is a matter for Wiltshire Council who in turn has to follow government guidelines. Carolyn and Marie have requested the CSW Advisory Group take this up on behalf of all villages.)
- It was also felt that a nationwide PR campaign about Speedwatch could do much to increase its validity and effectiveness - at the moment not enough people realise that these teams are trained and supported by the police.

- Another concern was over recruitment, although Berwick is extremely fortunate in this respect. **Action**
- It was also felt that there needs to be a reciprocal agreement between counties as motorists who speed in one county but live in another are not followed up by the local NPT. This is of particular importance to villages close to county borders.

There was some discussion about monitoring weight restrictions but Marie explained Speedwatch did not cover this; there is a separate scheme called Lorry Watch.

c. **Defibrillator & First Aid** - Mary Gatling

The defibrillator is now installed and two First Aid courses have been successfully run (19 people attended). Sally Hiscock has offered to run a defibrillator familiarisation course; many people have expressed interest in attending this. As some who wanted to do the First Aid course could not because of working during the day, it was suggested and agreed that Sally's course should be held in the evening. It was also suggested that those who wished to be identified as a First Aider could have their names put on the village website (please give your name to Neil McDougall).

Sally

Some of the cost of the defibrillator 'box' had been met through the Waitrose community support scheme (£250) and the Community Fund (£200; agreed at a Planning meeting on 12 June); the meeting expressed its appreciation to Mary Gatling for all her work and financial support for securing the machine and its casing. A sum of around £20 annually would need to be given to Marilyn to cover the electricity costs.

d. **Village Diary/Reading Room Update** – Nicky Street

The new season of Film Nights had got off to successful start with Philomena.

The next dates are October 23rd: The Book Thief

November 20th: The Monuments Men

January 22nd: The Grand Budapest Hotel

February 26th: Blue Jasmine

March 26th: Belle.

There will be the annual Christmas Sale in the Reading Room on December 6<sup>th</sup>: contributions of produce, Christmas cards and wrapping paper etc and good quality, nearly new items for sale would be greatly appreciated.

Nigel Rodgers will give a talk on Tuesday January 27<sup>th</sup>: "Trees – who needs them?"

The Macmillan Cancer coffee morning, which was ably organised by Helen Riding, raised £126.

The annual Harvest Supper is on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October.

There is a coffee morning at the Farm Shop on October 26<sup>th</sup>, at which Neals Yard products will be on sale.

## 8. **Village Meeting Wine Costs**

There was considerable discussion about the pros and cons of offering wine at the end of each village meeting. The cost at £5 a bottle averaged £25 per meeting. Over several years and 10 meetings the cost had been £250. Some people felt that offering wine and using the Community Fund could be divisive – some did not want to drink after the meeting, some cannot make the meetings, and others were unhappy with the idea of alcohol being paid for by the Community Fund. One idea put forward was to ask for donations towards the cost, rather than using the Fund. Others felt that offering wine free of charge was a good idea that should be continued; it meant many people stayed on after the meeting, and chatted together as well as continuing to discuss some of the

issues raised etc. They made the point that ideally a village meeting should have a social, community element rather than just being purely procedural, and thus the Fund was an appropriate source of funding.

**Action**

A vote was taken. All those in favour of donations only: 11. All those in favour of continuing to buy the wine from the Community Fund: 15.

It was also agreed to provide elderflower cordial for those wanting a soft drink.

## **9. Village fete/money raising events.**

The chairman presented the accounts for the summer fete, which raised £2300. It is clear to all that the Church, the Reading Room and the Community Fund all need to raise a certain amount of money each year, ideally in the same region as this year's fete. Toby and Sarah Humphreys have very understandably expressed a desire to have a break from hosting the fete at Berwick House. The meeting took this opportunity to thank Toby and Sarah very much for their hard work and great generosity in opening up their field and gardens to the fete for so many years.

The chairman then outlined the pros and cons of two other possible fete locations: the Guide Hut and Asserton House, of which the latter was by far the most attractive. He then outlined a suggestion for a different fundraising activity, which is essentially an Open Gardens weekend, with some of the most successful fete activities added in. These are the plant stall, bottle stall, raffle, teas and cakes, Pimms and beer tent, and barbecue (by Marilyn's shop) and the Duck Race. An art exhibition in the Reading Room was also proposed. The suggestion is that gardens would be open from 2-5pm on both Saturday and Sunday June 13 and 14, thus maximising the chance of good weather on one day if not the other, and of a good rose display. Entrance covering all gardens would be £5. Useful information had been gleaned from the organisers of the Woodford Valley Open Gardens; they had made about £1,200, but were only open for one day, and had no other activities on offer apart from teas.

Owners of seven gardens have already agreed to participate, and others at the meeting also expressed interest: the aim is to have a range of gardens, including small cottage gardens, interesting vegetable plots etc etc.

The aim at this meeting was to establish how much interest there was in trying out this new idea for a year, or whether we continue with a fete. It was acknowledged that such an event would not bring the community together in quite the same way as a fete, and that it was possible that losing the dog show might affect numbers, and might make it difficult to revive it another year. The chairman agreed to talk to Jean Collins-Pitman about this. However, it was also felt that until we try the gardens idea out, we will not know how successful it would be. A vote was taken: Those in favour of a Fete: 3. Those in favour of an Open Gardens Weekend: 21.

Chairman

The next meeting is on January 8 and at this point the Chairman will take the gardens proposal further, invite more ideas from villagers, and establish a committee to refine and organise the event. Neil is happy to organise this, on the basis that a replacement for his position as Village Chairman has been found by then.

Chairman

Anyone wanting to know more about the ideas so far proposed for the Open Gardens, please contact Neil.

**10. Any other business**

**Action**

Lyanne Street pointed that when BT renewed the box for the phone lines etc, they left the old box lying in the hedge. The Chairman said he would contact BT and ask them to remove it. **Chairman**

The provisional date for the next Village Meeting is 8th January.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32pm.

**Neil MacDougall**  
**Chairman Berwick Parish Meetings**